

Complaints and Appeals Policy

Certification Policy

Please support our commitment to sustainability and do not print this document unless it is necessary to do so.

Policy Reminders

Purpose and Scope	<p>This policy ensures that all complaints and disputes will be dealt with in a prompt, fair, consistent and objective manner and that applicants, candidates and other stakeholders are aware of the process for making a complaint. Complaints and appeals will be dealt with without recrimination.</p> <p>IPMA-Australia CB will be fair in the treatment of all those who raise concerns irrespective of protected characteristics. Complaints and disputes will be dealt with promptly, constructively and in confidence, with information shared only with persons involved with or subject to a complaint. See also IPMA-Australia CB Equality and Diversity policy.</p>
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General	
Information	
Questions	<p>Any questions about the use or content of this document should be addressed to IPMA – Australia at: enquiries@IPMA-Australia.com</p>
IPMA-Australia and Academy4 International	<p>Academy4 International is the Certification Body of IPMA-Australia (MA). It trades as IPMA-Australia (CB) in all matters relating to IPMA Certification including the application, assessment, and award of certificates to candidates as well as maintenance of the IPMA 4 Level Certification System in country. It is regulated by IPMA’s CVMB through IPMA validation in accordance with the IPMA ICR.</p>
Downloads	<p>All of the referenced files can be downloaded here: IPMA-Australia CB</p>
Policy Review	<p>This policy and the arrangements for its implementation will be reviewed by the Head of CB and/or Operations Manager in conjunction with staff on an annual basis.</p> <p>IPMA-Australia CB will carry out Interim reviews will take place if any adverse effects, issue or change control actions are identified as part of ongoing quality assurance and monitoring. For further information please see IPMA-Australia-CB-Change-Control-Policy.</p>
Acknowledgment of Country	<p>In our continuing commitment to Reconciliation, we recognise & acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres</p> <p>We also would like to acknowledge the First Peoples and Traditional Owners and custodians of the Country throughout the lands & waterways across the Australian continent.</p> <p>We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present, and emerging.</p>

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Complaints and Appeals

IPMA-Australia CB has established and published this process to deal with complaints and appeals in a fair, impartial, confidential and constructive manner. The process ensures that all complaints and appeals are handled and processed within a 3-month period from the date of receipt of a written complaint or appeal. The process also complies with all the provisions of this section of the IPMA ICR.

Complaints may come from any source (complainant) and can be filed at any time.

Appeals shall come from certification applicants and candidates (appellant) only. Applicants and candidates shall be informed that they may file an appeal, but only against the certification process or results.

IPMA-Australia CB will document all complaints and appeals and shall provide the complainant or appellant with a confirmation of receipt within 10 working days.

IPMA-Australia CB shall ensure that all complaints and appeals are normally handled and processed within a 3-month period from the date of receipt of a written complaint or appeal.

IPMA-Australia CB shall first try to resolve the complaint or appeal within its own operational management. If it fails to resolve the complaint or appeal, the matter will be escalated to the Complaints and Appeals Committee for review and decision.

Where a complaint or appeal leads IPMA-Australia CB to discover a failure in its assessment process, it shall inform IPMA of any adverse effect and take all reasonable steps to:

- identify any other candidate who has been affected by the failure
- correct or, where it cannot be corrected, mitigate as far as possible both adverse and other effects of the failure; and
- ensure that the failure does not recur in the future.

IPMA-Australia CB will provide contact details for IPMA so that a complaint or appeal against it can be registered with IPMA directly should the complainant not be satisfied with the IPMA-Australia CB response.

Complaints

Statement

IPMA-Australia CB shall establish, maintain and comply with complaints process in relation to all any dissatisfaction with the services provided by IPMA-Australia that requires an investigation and a response.

A complaint can be made by, but not limited to

- an applicant
- candidate
- employer
- member
- client
- supplier
- stakeholders

A complaint does not cover:

- appeals in relation to decisions made by IPMA-Australia CB which is covered in the Appeals section of this policy, or
- any complaint about possible malpractice or maladministration, which is covered by the IPMA-Australia-CB-Malpractice-and-Maladministration-Policy

IPMA-Australia CB will always aim to deal with complaints quickly and within the specified timescales. However, if it is clear the matter will require a further detailed investigation, IPMA-Australia CB will keep the complainant informed of the investigation process and progress at regular intervals.

Complaints may come from any source (complainant) and can be filed at any time by using the IPMA-Australia CB Complaints form (appendix A) and sending to enquiries@IPMA-Australia.com.

Complaints Procedure

Complaints will be received by the administration team and will be dealt with by the CB Operations Manager. If the complaint involves the Operations Manager an alternative senior manager not involved in the complaint will be appointed to manage the process.

The Operations Manager will carry out an initial assessment of the complaint. Most complaints should be resolved by discussion between the complainant and the appropriate member of staff. More serious or unusual complaints and disputes will be investigated personally by the Head of CB or Operations Manager.

If required, the Operations Manager will carry out a formal investigation of the complaint and may interview the complainant; the respondent; witnesses to the matter or events; and anyone they believe may have a role in establishing or disproving the complaint, as necessary.

IPMA-Australia CB will offer support at the meeting, if one is deemed necessary to resolve the situation. All complainants will be encouraged to bring a supporter to the interview. Vulnerable adults and those under 16 years of age must have the support of their care worker, or a person of their choice, who can act as their advocate and the IPMA-Australia CB must be informed.

There will be two possible outcomes:

- IPMA –Australia CB dismiss the complaint as unfounded, giving full reasons for the decision.
- IPMA-Australia CB uphold or partially uphold the complaint, offer an apology and to take appropriate steps to avoid a similar problem arising in the future.

In situations where a complaint is upheld, or where an investigation indicates a failure in our assessment processes, we will take appropriate action including:

- informing IPMA (where required) if a candidate's certification has been affected.
- identifying any other candidates who may have been affected by that failure.
- correcting or, where it cannot be corrected, mitigating as far as possible the effect of the failure.
- ensuring that the failure does not recur in the future.
- amending procedures and notifying relevant stakeholders of any changes that affect them and why and arranging appropriate training.

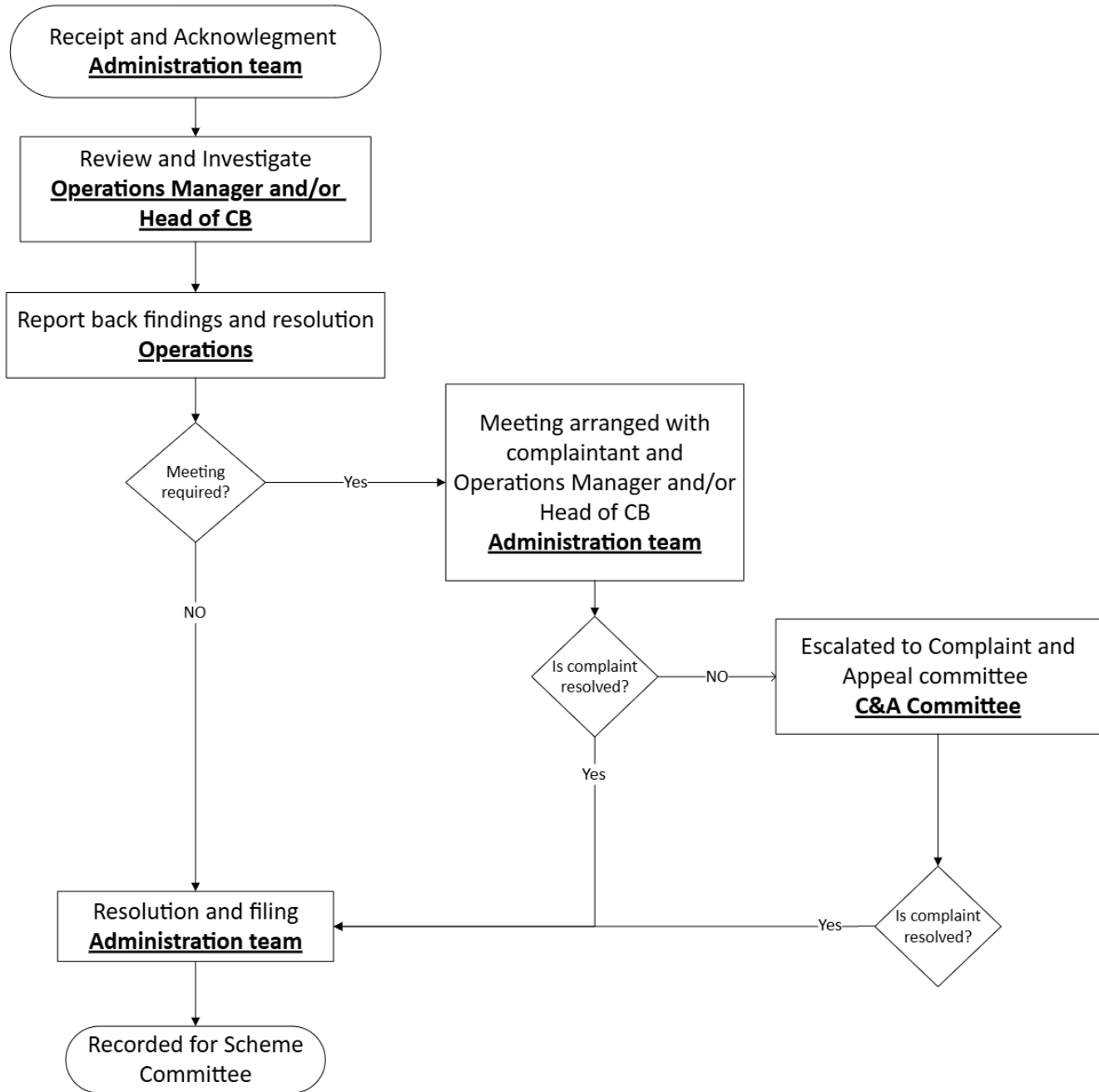
The Operations Manager will prepare a summary using the IPMA-Australia CB Investigation Report Form (appendix B) and report back to the Head of CB within 10 working days from the complaint acknowledged by IPMA-Australia CB. The Head of CB will review and respond within 10 working days. The administration team will record the outcome of the complaint and will either arrange a meeting to deliver the outcome all those involved or will deliver the outcome in writing as appropriate. All outcomes will normally be confirmed in writing within 3 months from date of receipt to all those involved, and a copy held on file.

IPMA-Australia will be tactful and courteous in dealing with a complaint and all records of conversations and correspondence will be held on file by the administration team.

The decision made will be final, but this does not affect an individual's legal rights.

IPMA-Australia CB will provide contact details for IPMA so that a complaint or appeal against it can be registered with IPMA directly should the complainant not be satisfied with the IPMA-Australia CB response.

Complaints flow diagram:



Appeals

Statement

IPMA-Australia CB shall establish, maintain and comply with an appeals process in relation to all certification activities which it makes available and must provide for the appeal of:

- the results of certification
- decisions regarding reasonable adjustments and special consideration, and
- decisions relating to any action to be taken against an applicant or candidate following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration.

For the purposes of the above, the IPMA-Australia CB appeals process will provide for:

- the effective appeal of results on the basis that IPMA-Australia CB did not apply procedures consistently or that procedures were not followed properly and fairly
- all appeal decisions to be taken by individuals who have no personal interest in the decision being appealed
- appeal decisions to be only taken by persons who have appropriate competence
- the final decision in respect of the outcome of an appeal to involve at least one decision maker who is not an employee of IPMA-Australia CB, an assessor working for it, or otherwise connected to it, and
- timelines for the outcome of appeals.

IPMA-Australia CB will always aim to deal with enquiries/appeals quickly and within the specified timescales. However, if it is clear the matter will require a further detailed investigation, IPMA-Australia CB will keep the appellant informed of the investigation process and progress at regular intervals.

Appeals shall come from certification applicants and candidates (appellant) only. Applicants and candidates shall be informed that they may file an appeal, but only against the process, by using IPMA-Australia CB Enquiry form (appendix C) and must sent to enquiries@IPMA-Australia.com within 30 days from the certification decision.

Three-Stage Process

IPMA-Australia CB has a three-stage procedure for those wishing to raise an enquiry/appeal against a certification decision. The stage chosen is dependent on the grounds in which the candidate would like to progress.

There is a right to submit a certification decision enquiry/appeal without fear of reprisal or victimisation and should expect IPMA-Australia CB to deal with an appeal seriously, impartially and in confidence.

Stages 1, 2 & 3 will incur a fee which is refundable should the enquiry/appeal be upheld.

Full details of enquiry/appeal fees will be within the IPMA-Australia-CB-Fees-Policy.

Please note:

- IPMA-Australia CB reserves the right to advise on an alternative stage or reject a request depending on the information submitted.
- by attending the assessment, candidates have confirmed they are fit to do so; no appeals will be heard concerning the wellbeing of the candidate during the assessment as this should have been addressed at the time to IPMA-Australia CB.
- IPMA-Australia CB is unable to provide further feedback or share candidate answers. For professional discussion, IPMA-Australia CB uses a question bank which is in constant circulation and are therefore, unable to release candidate answers which would compromise the security and integrity of the question bank.
- candidate scores are released per assessment criteria, and this is the only level of feedback that is provided.
- an enquiry/appeal cannot be submitted based on technical difficulties or issues as this should have been addressed at the time to IPMA-Australia CB.
- It is not possible to provide an uplift in results because of any technical issues encountered.
- IPMA-Australia CB are not obliged to pursue payments regarding any appeal lodged by the candidate.
- failure to receive payment for enquiries within the allocated 30 days will result in the appeal being closed.

Enquiry Table

	Zero Charge Enquiry	Stage 1 enquiry	Stage 2 enquiry	Appeal
Grounds	General enquiry.	Candidate believes that a procedural error has occurred.	Candidate believes that a specific marking or assessment error has occurred for questions or specific aspects of the assessment.	Candidate believes that the overall examination certification result was unjustified.
Examples may include but are not limited to:	Asking for clarification of the regulations, procedures or guidance.	Candidate query related to whether the correct results have been issued.	Disputing the previous appeal stage outcome.	Disputing the previous appeal stage outcome.
	Information on how to make a results enquiry/appeal.	Candidate believes IPMA-Australia did not apply its policies or procedures consistently and properly.*	Specific marking/ assessment concerns relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examination • assessment of report, or • interview. 	Disputing the overall unsuccessful result awarded.
	Details of the resit process or the options to resit.	Decisions regarding Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration.	Candidate believes that IPMA-Australia did not apply its policies and procedures consistently or properly.*	Disputing the outcome of a certification application, certification result and re-certification result.
Indicative outcome timescale	Within 5 working days*	Initial response within 15 working days of receipt of payment. This will also include an indicative timescale for final outcome**	Initial response within 15 working days of receipt of payment. This will also include an indicative timescale for final outcome**	Initial response within 15 working days of receipt of payment. This will also include an indicative timescale for final outcome**

*Please note we can only assess evidence provided at the time of assessment

**Timeframes may vary depending on the nature of the enquiry and the level of Investigation required

For zero charge enquiries please email enquiries@IPMA-Australia.com. An appellant may skip the zero-charge enquiry, but each subsequent stage must be completed before being escalated to the next appeal stage.

If an appeal is submitted, the appellant may choose to withdraw the appeal at any time.

Stage 1 Enquiry

Following the initial enquiry stage made with IPMA-Australia CB, the appellant may wish to raise a Stage 1-Enquiry.

This stage will initially be fully investigated by the IPMA-Australia CB Quality Team who will consider any queries and will aim to inform the appellant of the decision within 15 working days from receipt of payment.

IPMA-Australia CB Quality Team will complete IPMA-Australia CB Enquiry Outcome Report (Appendix D), the report will be sent directly to the appellant within 15 working days of the enquiry decision.

Stage 2 Enquiry

Following the results of Stage 1-Enquiry, if the appellant wishes to challenge the outcome, they can then escalate the enquiry to a Stage 2-Enquiry within 10 working days of the result of Stage 2-Enquiry being issued. IPMA-Australia CB will undertake an internal review of the enquiry to reach an outcome.

A Stage 2-Enquiry will be managed by the IPMA-Australia CB Quality Manager, with support from other members of the Quality Team not involved in the original assessment(s) and who do not have any conflict of interest which may affect the outcome.

For a Stage 2-Enquiry there are two possible outcomes:

- the enquiry is upheld because the correct processes, procedures and/or policy documents were not followed. IPMA-Australia CB shall inform all parties in writing of this decision.
- the appeal is rejected because the correct processes, procedures and/or policy documents were followed. If this is the case, IPMA-Australia CB shall inform all parties in writing of the decision and inform the appellant details of how to move to Stage 3-Appeal.

IPMA-Australia CB Quality Manager will complete IPMA-Australia CB Enquiry Outcome Report (Appendix D), the report will be sent directly to the appellant within 15 working days of the enquiry decision.

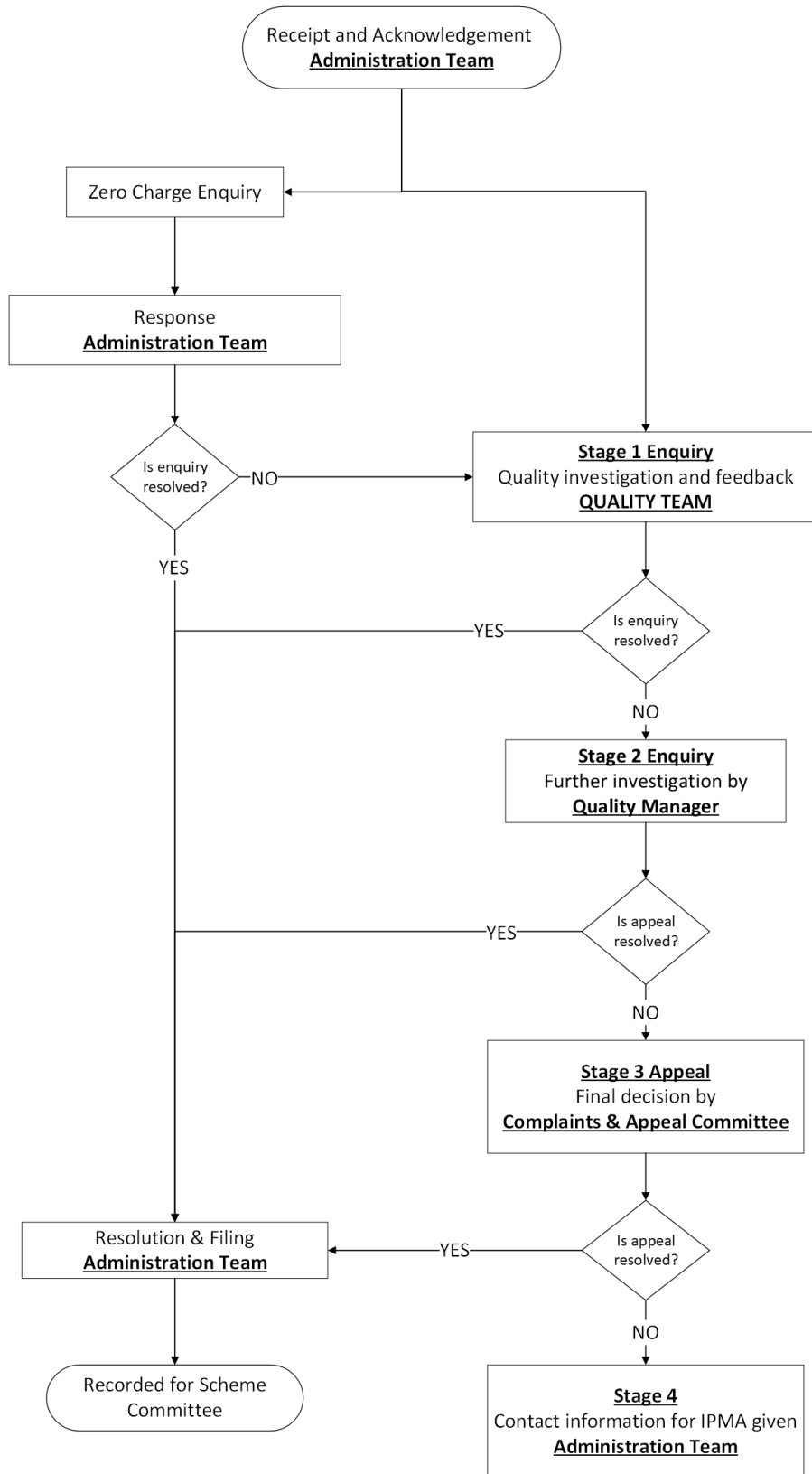
Stage 3 Complaints and Appeals Committee

IPMA-Australia aim to resolve appeals at stage 1 and 2, if the appellant does not feel the outcome has been satisfactorily resolved this can be escalated to Stage 3-Appeal, IPMA-Australia CB Complaints and Appeals Committee will consider all evidence and assess whether procedures were followed consistently and applied properly and fairly in line with the IPMA-Australia CB policy to arrive at a judgement.

The IPMA-Australia CB Complaints and Appeals Committees decision is final.

IPMA-Australia CB will inform the appellant of the outcome within 6 weeks from receiving the Stage 3-Appeal payment. If circumstances require additional time, IPMA-Australia CB will inform the appellant on the progress and likely timescale for resolution.

Enquiry/Appeals flow diagram:



Recording of Complaints and Appeals

All complaints and appeals that are received by IPMA-Australia CB will be recorded on a register for audit and regulatory purposes including for review periodically by the IPMA-Australia Scheme Committee.

IPMA-Australia CB will review the Complaints-and-Appeals-Log periodically and present findings to the Scheme Committee to include:

- number of complaints and disputes of each type.
- time taken to process complaints and disputes.
- list of outstanding complaints and disputes.
- outcomes to complaints and disputes.
- results of appeals.
- analysis of complaints and disputes and outcomes by age, gender and ethnicity of complainant.

A record of all complaints and disputes for 5 years will be available to the relevant authorities for audit purposes.

Complaints and Appeals Committee

The members of the Complaints and Appeals Committee will be appointed by the Head of CB and will not have been involved in the complaint of appeal that is being made.

For all Stage 3-Appeals, the Panel will include an assessor, an independent person (who will not be/will not have been an IPMA-Australia CB employee or IPMA-Australia CB external contractor at any time) and the appointed Chair of the Panel who will usually be the Operations Manager.

The Panel members will have appropriate competence, knowledge and skills and will not have been involved in the original decisions or processes, at the enquiry about results stage, or have been involved in the original appeal decision and will not have a personal interest in the appeal outcome. The Panel will review the appeal application, supporting documents and any records relating to the original decision.

Confidentiality and Whistleblowing

IPMA-Australia CB recognises that there are occasions where a complainant or appellant wishes to remain anonymous. Whilst the preference is that all complainants or appellants provide contact details, if there is concern about negative consequences, a complainant or appellant may request that their identity is not divulged. It should be noted that IPMA-Australia CB is not obliged to disclose information to a third party where it would be considered a breach of confidentiality and/or any other legislative obligation.

At all times IPMA-Australia CB will investigate such complaints and disputes from whistleblowers in accordance with the IPMA-Australia-Whistleblowing-Policy and any relevant legislation.

Appendices

Appendix A – IPMA-Australia CB Complaints Form

If you wish to make a formal complaint it will not affect your statutory rights. If you are unable to complete this form yourself, you are welcome to ask a member of IPMA-Australia.

Name of the person making the complaint:	
Email address:	
Telephone No.:	
Address:	
Nature of the complaint. Please detail what your complaint is regarding. If you need to continue a separate sheet, please do so.	
Date your complaint relates to:	
What action would you like us to take?	
Have you raised this issue informally: (Please delete as appropriate)	Yes /No
If yes, which member of staff did you raise this with and what was their response?	
If no, can you state why you did not raise this informally?	
Signature:	Date:

OFFICE USE ONLY

Area:	
Date of the complaint:	

Nature of the complaint: (please indicate with an X)			
Assessment Quality		Information/Communication	
Financial		Facilities	
Course Issue		Personal	
Other: (please state)			

Nature of the complaint: (please indicate with an X)			
Applicant		Candidate	
Visitor		Employer	
Contractor		Client	
Other: (please state)			

Action Taken:	
By Whom:	Related dates:
Completion date:	Signed:

Appendix B – IPMA-Australia CB Investigation Report Form

Investigating Officer:	
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Section 1: Details of the complaint	
Name of complainant:	
Status of complainant: <i>(e.g., applicant/candidate etc.)</i>	
Telephone No:	
Email:	
Nature of the complaint: <i>(background, issues, - attach complaint form)</i>	
Staff involved:	
Date complaint received:	
Reply deadline:	

Section 2: Investigation	
Interviews: <i>(attach notes)</i>	Dates:
Findings:	
Evidence: <i>(attach notes/files)</i>	
Recommendations:	
By whom:	
By when:	
Response letter sent by whom:	
By when:	
Signed:	Date:

Appendix C – IPMA-Australia CB Enquiry/Appeal form	
Applicant/Candidate Name:	
Email Address:	
Contact Number:	
What IPMA level are you enquiring/appealing against?	
Date of Exam/Interview/Application:	
Enquiry/Appeal Stage required:	
Please provide full details of your results enquiry/appeal and evidence the specific are or process you would like to enquire/appeal against.	

I agree to pay the administration cost for the enquiry/appeal administration (to be refunded if enquiry upheld)

For full details on cost for enquiry/appeal, please see the latest IPMA-Australia-Fees-Policy.

Invoice Name:		Invoice Email:	
Invoice Organisation:		Invoice Address:	
Purchase Order No. if applicable:			

Print Name:		Signature:	
Date:		Organisation:	

Appendix D – IPMA-Australia CB Enquiry Outcome Report			
Applicant/Candidate Name:			
IPMA Level:			
Enquiry Review Date:		Enquiry IQA:	

Grounds for Enquiry	
Procedural error: (Please delete as appropriate)	Yes/No
Result:	
Enquiry Outcome:	
IQA Signature:	Date:

Version Control			
Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Summary of changes
1.0	7 th August 2024	E.Wilson	IPMA-Australia Baseline document created